

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1 - 6. (cancelled)

7. (currently amended) A brush seal segment, comprising:

a pre-assembled bristle arrangement having a plurality of linear bristles with each of said bristles having a first end and a second end opposed to said first end, and a retention section attached to the second end of said bristles to join said bristles together;

a pair of plates flanking said pre-assembled bristle arrangement and having a channel to frictionally engage said retention section, said channel extending to an end of at least one of said plates;

each of said plates having a surface which abuts and contacts said bristles of said bristle arrangement and at least one of said surfaces forming a portion of said channel; and

wherein said channel allows movement of said retention section before said plates are secured together and prevents movement of said retention section after said plates are secured together.

8. (cancelled)

9. (previously presented) The brush seal segment of claim 7, wherein said channel has a width corresponding to a width of said retention section and a length greater than a length of said retention section.

10. (previously presented) The brush seal segment of claim 7, wherein said channel is located on at least one of said plates.

11. (original) The brush seal segment of claim 10, wherein said channel is located on both of said plates.

12. (original) The brush seal segment of claim 7, wherein said bristle arrangement comprises a bristle ring.

13. (currently amended) A brush seal segment comprising:

a pre-assembled bristle arrangement having a plurality of bristles and a retention section;

each of said bristles having a first end and a second end opposed to said first end;

said retention section joining said second ends of said bristles together;

a pair of first and second plates flanking said bristle arrangement;

said first plate having a first planar surface and said second plate having a second planar surface abutting said first planar surface;

each of said plates having an arcuate portion adjacent a respective one of said first and second planar surfaces and a substantially linear portion adjacent said arcuate portion forming and having a channel to frictionally engage said retention section on opposed sides of said retention section, said channel extending to an end of at least one of said plates;

wherein said channel allows movement of said retention section before said plates are secured together and prevents movement of said retention section after said plates are secured together; and

wherein said brush seal segment is part of a packing ring.

14. (previously presented) The brush seal segment of claim 13, wherein said packing ring includes a labyrinth seal.

15 - 22. (cancelled)

23. (previously presented) The brush seal segment of claim 7, wherein said channel has a uniform depth.

24. (currently amended) A brush seal segment comprising:

a pre-assembled bristle arrangement having a plurality of bristles having a first end and a second end and a retention section joining said bristles together at said second end;

a pair of plates flanking said bristle arrangement and having a channel to frictionally engage opposed sides of said retention section, said channel extending to an end of at least one of said plates;

wherein said channel allows movement of said retention section before said plates are secured together and prevents movement of said retention section after said plates are secured together; and

~~wherein said bristle arrangement comprises a plurality of bristles abutting said plates and said retention section consisting of a weld joint securing said bristles together, and said weld joint is said retention section.~~